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THE REFLEXIVE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH--A TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH.

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THIS ARTICLE IS NOT CONCERNED WITH WRITING A TRANSFORMATIONAL GENERATIVE GRAMMAR FOR REFLEXIVE SENTENCES OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH BUT RATHER WITH THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF TRANSFORMATIONAL ANALYSIS--THE UNDERLYING, FUNDAMENTAL NOTIONS THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING. THE AUTHORS RELATE THESE NOTIONS (LINGUISTIC UNIVERSALS, COMPETENCE, AND PERFORMANCE) TO THE REFLEXIVE AND MAKE A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REFLEXIVE IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH. DISCUSSED ARE--(1) THE OVERT FORMS THAT HELP CARRY OR MARK THE REFLEXIVE IN THE TWO LANGUAGES, (2) THE USE OF THESE FORMS, (3) THE PROBLEMS THAT ARISE IN USING REFLEXIVE CONSTRUCTIONS WHEN NEEDED AND AVOIDING THEM WHEN INAPPROPRIATE, (4) PROBLEMS OF TRANSATION IN THE AREA OF REFLEXIVE ANAPHORA (BACK REFERENCE) WHEN THE SPEAKER OF ENGLISH MUST ACCOMMODATE HIMSELF TO THE PATTERN OF SPANISH, AND (5) PROBLEMS FACING THE SPEAKER OF SPANISH WHEN LEARNING AND USING THE ENGLISH REFLEXIVE. THE AUTHORS FEEL THAT SUCH CONTRASTIVE DATA WILL HELP THE TEACHER IN SEQUENCING MATERIALS AND GIVING GRAMMATICAL EXPLANATIONS THAT CAN LEAD THE STUDENT TO CLEARER PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENT WAYS OF ORGANIZING REALITY. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE 1967 CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FOREIGN STUDENT AFFAIRS AND APPEARED IN "TESOL QUARTERLY," VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2, MARCH 1968. (DO)

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Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

*The Reflexive in English and Spanish: A Transformational Approach**

J. Donald Bowen and Terence Moore

We should like to begin by clarifying our subtitle: a transformational approach. What does it mean to say that we are adopting the theoretical framework developed by Noam Chomsky? It might indicate that we intend to write out some dense, high-powered, abstract symbols which we might claim will enumerate, if you follow the rules of the linguistic calculus, all the well-formed reflexive sentences of English or Spanish. But however interesting this activity may be, it is totally inappropriate to the task of language teaching.

As there is more to mathematics than knowing the notation, so there is a great deal more to transformational theory than the clever juggling of formulas. In fact, over-concentration on formulaic abbreviation can obscure the underlying and fundamental notions that the theory seeks to represent. It is two of these notions, notions that are central to transformational theory, that seem to us to be of great importance to linguists applying themselves to the problems of language teaching. The first of them is usually discussed under the rubric *linguistic universals*. The second is the division of the field of linguistic investigation into two distinct but related areas; we study at one time the *competence* of a native speaker and at a different time the *performance* of a native speaker. In short, we maintain a distinction between the study of competence and the study of performance. Let us take each of these notions in turn and discuss them in general before relating them to our specific topic—the reflexive.

We can best characterize what a transformationalist means by linguistic universals by considering the process through which a child comes to learn his own language. It is reasonable to assume that a child who has learned his language has in some sense developed an internal representation of a system of rules. That he has mastered rules is clear from the so-called "mistakes" the child makes. The native English-speaking child who says "I writed in school today" inspires admiration for the logic and rationality he is bringing to the task of language learning, but at the same time regret that the illogicality and irrationality of

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some language performance must also be taught. The set of rules he has mastered enables him to determine how sentences are formed, used, and understood. On the basis of primary linguistic data, a medley of correct and incorrect sentences, he has devised for himself a transformational generative grammar.

Moreover, the fact that children rarely fail to devise such a grammar despite wide differences in intellectual equipment, any more than they fail to learn to walk, very strongly suggests that the child approaches the task of language learning equipped with a set of initial, very tacit predispositions about the nature of language. These deep-down predispositions interacting with the particular speech community he finds himself in, gradually result in a specific and differentiated grammar of a particular language. Since it is clear that children are not predisposed to learn one language rather than another, it follows that these predispositions are not specific to any one language or even to any one family of languages, but belong to language universally.

Part of the task the transformationalist sets for himself is to try to specify in as richly detailed a way as possible a set of hypotheses about the innate abilities that enable children everywhere to learn their language. To the extent that the transformationalist is successful, and these are very early days in the development of the theory, he is in a position to explain why grammars of particular languages take the form they do take. In essence, our particular grammars are constrained by our view of what the universal grammar out of which they have been derived might be. Out of an investigation of a number of natural languages, we expect to find similarities emerging that are attributable to the general form of language as such. Insofar as we can show that these similarities hold for languages everywhere, we can argue that the similarities are indeed linguistic universals.

The particular linguistic universal we are concerned with here is often referred to as *anaphora*. Of course, nowhere near every language in the world has been investigated, but a reasonable guess for a linguist confronted with what is for him a new language is that it will contain examples of the syntactic phenomenon *anaphora*. *Anaphora*, you will recall, is from the Greek *ana*—meaning "back"—and *pherein*—meaning "to carry." Thus, *anaphora* refers to the everyday syntactic phenomenon that allows a word or words to refer back to another word or words already used. Thus in

Sam enjoys swimming and Mary does, too

does is understood as referring back to the predicate *enjoys swimming*.

We can't be sure that anaphora, or back reference, is a linguistic universal, but it seems a pretty reasonable working assumption. Certainly English and Spanish make extensive use of it. But our common-sense knowledge leads us to watch out for differences in the handling of anaphora in the two languages. In transformational terms, both languages may have a set of rules that are basically identical since they formalize the same phenomenon, but which nevertheless differ in the range of their application. Since anaphora covers all kinds of pronominal replace-

ment and since our time is limited, we must confine ourselves to one particular form of it—reflexive anaphora.

Before recalling some essential facts about English reflexive anaphora as a basis for making a comparison of English and Spanish, we must make a few brief comments on other notion central to transformational theory that is relevant to our needs: the distinction between *competence* and *performance*. A way of keeping this distinction clear is to recall the analogy made by the man who is sometimes called the father of modern linguistics, the great Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. De Saussure used to compare the difference between *la langue* and *la parole* to the difference between the score of a symphony and the actual playing of the symphony in a given concent by particular musicians on a specific night. However good, bad, or indifferent the playing may be on any occasion, the score of the symphony remains the same. What the score is to the playing, *competence* is to *performance*. When we study the *competence* of a language user, we are interested in the score; we abstract away from the effects of human frailties on language use and consider only how an ideal speaker in an ideal speech community might generate well-formed sentences and comprehend equally well-formed sentences generated by any other ideal speaker.

But note that this process of abstraction, a familiar one in any scientific activity, is a *starting-point*, not a *stopping-point*. We abstract away from what William James called the "bloomin' buzzin' confusion" of ordinary linguistic behavior in order to be able to state the simplest and most general rules employed by the system that underlies language. Equipped with some fairly precise knowledge of that system, we can with some degree of confidence approach the actual *performance* of native speakers and ask first where and how their utterances differ from the well-formed sentences generated by a grammar of competence. When we know where and how actual utterances can differ from well-formed sentences, we can seek an explanation for this difference. We can try, that is, to build a better, more comprehensive theory of language that accounts both for the well-formed sentences of the grammar of competence, and also accounts for the systematic deviations from well-formedness that actual linguistic behavior demonstrates, i.e., the grammar of performance.

This distinction between competence and performance must be kept in mind. For example, we shall assume that given a sentence like *Zuker shaved Zuker* and given that Zuker and Zuker refer to the same individual, an obligatory rule of the grammar will require that the sentence be structurally changed to *Zuker shaved himself*. One could conceivably argue that such a rule is not obligatory since it is quite possible to say *Zuker shaved Zuker* even when the same Zuker is referred to. Literally speaking, this is true, but the ability of a speaker of English to do this on particular occasions is an important fact for a study of performance. However, in order to write a set of maximally simple rules that explain the underlying competence of a speaker of English, we tentatively assume there is an obligatory rule that changes *Zuker shaved Zuker* to *Zuker*

shaved himself. We defend this position by saying that working separately with the domains of competence and performance is fruitful. It leads to the formulation of interesting and testable insights about language.

In order to discuss the abstract system of reflexive anaphora in English and Spanish more concretely, we next consider the overt forms that help carry or mark that system.

An interesting question involving the concept of universality can be seen in back reference, since it is in the nature of human communication that a subject of discourse is not limited to a single sentence in a conversation. Must reflexive anaphora be specifically marked, or is it sufficient that a back reference be potential—even though ambiguous? Asked in other words, is marked reflexive anaphora a linguistic universal? Perhaps it isn't (Sweet claims that Old English used the same pronouns for reflexive and nonreflexive reference), but it is certainly widespread. Its occurrence is marked in both English and Spanish, the two languages we shall compare, but it is marked in ways that are interestingly different.

In English, reflexive pronouns consist of regular possessive or objective pronouns with *self* suffixed to singular forms, *selves* to plurals. First and second person forms are built on the possessive: *myself, ourselves, yourself, yourselves*. But third person forms are built on the objective: *himself, herself, itself, themselves*. The form *herself* is perhaps questionable, since *her* is both possessive and objective, and *itself* could conceivably be a case of a reduced double *s* from *its* and *self*. *Him* and *them* are clearly objective, however, and in view of the complexity of the total pattern it should come as no surprise that there are speakers (both native and second-language students) who use the nonstandard forms *hisself* and *theirselves*.

These are the only reflexive pronouns in English, and they occur with verbs or after prepositions. They cannot appear as the primary constituent of a noun phrase used as a subject, but they can serve as appositives, in a function that is not reflexive anaphora in the usual sense of marking identity, but rather as an indication of emphasis, as in "I myself will do it." In this function, unlike the more usual appositive pattern, the *self* forms need not occur immediately following the antecedent, but may occur later in the sentence, typically last, as in "I will do it myself." Perhaps this freedom of occurrence is possible because the appositive relationship is marked by the *self* forms.

Spanish reflexive forms contrast in a number of ways. Spanish is more parsimonious with its forms, with only two exclusively reflexive pronouns: *se* used with verbs and *sí* with prepositions. Spanish specifically marks the reflexive only where there is a possibility of ambiguity in reference, which means only with a third-person subject. First- and second-person forms, which are uniquely identifiable from context, take an undifferentiated set of object pronouns with verbs; members of this set—*me nos te os*—may have reflexive or nonreflexive reference. Thus, for example, reflexive anaphora is marked in *me lastimé* not by the pronoun *me*, but by its occurrence with *lastimé*, both referring to first

person singular. In *me lastimó* the anaphora is not reflexive. When both subject and object are first (or second) person, the construction is *per se* reflexive. But when both subject and object are third person, reflexive anaphora cannot be assumed; it must be marked. Thus *lo lastimó* is nonreflexive and *se lastimó* is reflexive. All the Spanish reflexive must indicate is identity with the subject—there is no need to preserve either gender or number in the reflexive object since these are specified by the subject, and/or by the ending of the verb. Hence *se* can be translated as *himself, herself, itself, themselves* if these forms occompany a verb, while the same forms are translated by *sí* if they follow a preposition.

Perhaps we should point out that while anaphora indicates back reference, this does not mean that in a final derived sentence the linear order of items must necessarily have the anaphoric form following its referent. Transformations may place the form marked for anaphora before the item it refers to, as in the Spanish sentence *Se abrieron las puertas*, which shows an inversion that locates the subject *after* the verb and its enclitic reflexive pronoun.

In English and Spanish the back reference is marked in the object, since in normal order the subject comes earlier in the sentence. In Hiligaynon, a Philippine language, the subject normally comes last, after the object, and it is therefore the subject that is marked for a reflexive back reference. The form of the Hiligaynon reflexive is suggestive of the English pattern, with a noun meaning "self" modified by a possessive. The pattern is shown in the following example sentences:

I washed	myself				
Ginhugasan	ko	ang	akon	kaugalingon	
Past-wash	me	the	my	self	
Verb	Object	Subject			

He hurt She hurt	himself herself				
Nasaktan	nia	ang	iya	kaugalingon	
Past-hurt	him/her	the	his/her	self	
Verb	Object	Subject			

Like Spanish, the Hiligaynon sentence may be rearranged by an inverting transformation, so that the marked reflexive phrase may actually precede the "antecedent" it refers to:

Ang akon kaugalingon ginhugasan ko.

Ang iya kaugalingon nasaktan nia.

But to return to the primary subject of our paper, it is apparent that the English and Spanish reflexive pronoun patterns are different in form. They are also different in distribution, as we shall see.

Let's look at the following two sentences, which illustrate some important facts about the occurrence of reflexive anaphora in English:

(1) Peter washed himself.
(2) Peter washed him.

Native speakers will certainly agree that both sentences are grammatical, but that sentence (1) must be understood as a case of reflexive anaphora, and sentence (2) as a case of nonreflexive anaphora. In sentence (1) *Peter* and *himself* refer to the same person, but in sentence (2) *Peter* and *him* refer to different persons.

The six pairs of sentences below, numbered (3) through (14), demonstrate that the same observation holds in more complex constructions:

(3) Mother persuaded Peter to wash himself.
(4) Mother persuaded Peter to wash him.
(5) Mother persuaded herself to wash Peter.
(6) Mother persuaded her to wash Peter.
(7) Jane can take care of herself.
(8) Jane can take care of her.
(9) She sent herself a valentine.
(10) She sent her a valentine.
(11) This is the boy who hurt himself.
(12) This is the boy who hurt him.
(13) He pointed at himself.
(14) He pointed at him.

Sentences (15) to (18) show that the process of reflexivization does not take place when the noun phrases that are identical are not within the same clause. The errors in (15) and (17) render them nongrammatical.

(15) *Jane's uncle supported herself.
(16) Jane's uncle supported her.
(17) Helen went to the store. *Herself bought some avocados.
(18) Helen went to the store. She bought some avocados.

Sentences (19) to (22) show that English does have a class, a very small class, of verbs that must take a reflexive form.

(19) Martha prides herself on her cooking.
(20) *Martha prides her on her cooking.
(21) Bob absented himself from kitchen duties.
(22) *Bob absented him from kitchen duties.

Because in these cases the selection of the reflexive is completely determined, there is nothing of very great interest to be said about the forms except that they need to be marked as obligatorily requiring the reflexive. Sentences (20) and (22) are ungrammatical.

Sentences (23) to (28) show that every silver lining has a cloud. There are problems here that appear to be counter-examples to the generalizations we can make about English reflexive anaphora:

(23) Look at yourself.
(24) Look at you.
(25) He kept the candy near himself.
(26) He kept the candy near him.
(27) He looked around himself.
(28) He looked around him.

Sentences (24), (26), and (28) ought to be ungrammatical; yet they occur. But if our analysis is productive, the points where the problems arise should be a route to a better solution, and some are discussed below. Setting aside temporarily the last group of sentences, we can make at least the following generalizations about English reflexive anaphora: (a) reflexivization occurs in English when two referentially identical NP's are contained within the same clause (within the same constituent S); and (b) reflexivization does not occur in English when two referentially identical NP's are not within the same clause (within the same constituent S).

Spanish can match all of the English reflexive rules. We can say, for instance:

(1) Pedro se lavó.
or (2) Pedro lo lavó.

As in English the first sentence is contextually complete, since the antecedent of the pronoun is within the sentence cited. The second sentence is not possible at the initiation of common focus, since the antecedent of *lo* is not within the cited sentence but must be presumed as previously identified.

All of the English sentences numbered (3) to (14) can be translated by Spanish equivalents with a reflexive pronoun in precisely the same position as in the English sentences cited earlier.

(3) Mamá persuadió a Pedro a que se lavara.
(4) Mamá persuadió a Pedro a que lo lavara.
(5) Mamá se persuadió a lavar a Pedro.
(6) Mamá la persuadió a lavar a Pedro.
(7) Juana puede cuidarse.
(8) Juana puede cuidarla.
(9) Ella se mandó una tarjeta del día de San Valentín.
(10) Ella le mandó una tarjeta del día de San Valentín.
(11) Este es el muchacho que se lastimó.
(12) Este es el muchacho que lo lastimó.
(13) El se apuntó.
(14) El le apuntó.

Spanish also matches English in not allowing an interpretation that refers a reflexive to a preceding noun that is not the subject of the sentence. To translate the English nonsentence *"Jane's uncle supported herself" is impossible because the feminine gender of *herself* is lost in *se*. Thus

(15) El tío de Juana se mantuvo.

can only refer *se* to *tío*, not to *Juana*. Of course we can say:

(16) El tío de Juana la mantuvo.

matching the English "Jane's uncle supported her."

The English pattern is identical with Spanish in the exclusion of reflexives as subject pronouns. Spanish can say:

(17) Elena fue a la tienda. Se compró unos aguacates.

But *se* translates "for herself." Neither *se* nor *herself* can function as a subject. If a subject is expressed in Spanish, it would be *ella*, but Spanish would likely not use a pronoun subject so soon after the referent had been mentioned. More naturally one would say:

(18) Elena fue a la tienda. Compró unos aguacates.

Spanish matches English in another pattern, in having certain verbs with which reflexive pronouns are obligatory. Thus we have:

(19) Marta se jacta de su don de cocinar.

and (21) Roberto se ausentó de la cocina.

It is not possible to say:

(20) *Marta la jacta de su don de cocinar.

or (22) *Roberta lo ausentó de la cocina.

Spanish is different from English only in having a very considerable number of verbs which must appear with reflexive pronouns, whereas these are relatively rare in English. Examples of exclusively reflexive verbs in Spanish are very common; some are *abstenerse, acurrucarse, arrepentirse, atreverse, dignarse, gloriarse, preciarse, quejarse*. Some of the equivalence patterns will be given below.

With sentences that include reflexive anaphora in prepositional phrases,

the English reflexive rule cannot be unequivocally applied. In some sentences English requires a reflexive pronoun in a prepositional phrase as the general rule predicts. Thus "He made fun of himself" equates *he* and *himself*, but "He made fun of him" specifically differentiates *he* and *him*. But you will recall that there is a choice in "He kept the candy near himself" and "He kept the candy near him." In this last sentence, *he* and *him* could well refer to the same person, but it is not necessary that they do so. The ambivalence is also apparent in "He looked around himself" and "He looked around him."

There is no question of choice in Spanish.

(25) El guardó los dulces cerca de sí.

can only mean "near himself,"
and

(26) El guardó los dulces cerca de él.

can only refer to someone else. This is likewise true of:

(27) El miró alrededor de sí.

and

(28) El miró alrededor de él.

The pattern is consistent in Spanish: reflexive pronoun means reflexive reference; nonreflexive pronoun means nonreflexive reference.

At this point we have to begin making some important distinctions between Spanish and English. While the rules we have cited for English can be applied almost without modification to Spanish sentence patterns, these rules do not cover the entire range of reflexive usage in Spanish. Spanish reflexive anaphora goes further in its application, to a variety of other patterns.

The first example is the use of reflexive pronouns with verbs that are normally considered intransitive in English. Thus Spanish says:

(29) Se sentó en la sala.
(30) Se alegró de oír la noticia.
(31) Se acostó a las once.

for "He sat in the living room," "He was glad to hear the news," "He went to bed at eleven." Perhaps one could say that intransitive verbs in a sense are inherently reflexive. If I go to bed at eleven, I am the one that is put to bed. English may assume this, Spanish specifies it.

Another pattern in which Spanish regularly uses the reflexive is in agent deletion. Notice the reflexives in the following three sentences:

(32) El plomo se funde fácilmente.
(33) La puerta se abrió sin ruido.
(34) Este traje se lava muy bien.

In English the equivalents are "Lead melts easily," "The door opened quietly," "This suit washes very well." The English speaker knows that lead doesn't melt anything, that something melts lead; likewise that somebody opened the door and someone washes the suit. The Spanish speaker uses reflexive pronouns not found in the equivalent English translations; still he knows that literally speaking lead doesn't melt itself, doors don't open themselves, and suits don't wash themselves. But he takes advantage of a specific application of the basic rule of reflexive anaphora in Spanish which differs in a substantial way from the English rule: The reflexive construction in English is limited to animate subjects; it is not so limited in Spanish. Hence where the English speaker expects the subject of a reflexive sen-

tence to have the capacity to carry out the action of the verb, the Spanish speaker exacts no such requirement. For him the reflexive pronoun merely says: identity with the subject. It is quite natural, then, to use the Spanish *se* in cases of agent deletion, since merely by deleting the agent we deny its importance. When we say, "This dress washes very well," we don't care who washes the dress; the important fact is that it gets washed and that it can be done well.

Notice that we say in English, "The dress got washed" or "The fence got painted." In English when we wish to suppress the agent, a favorite grammatical device to do so is the passive. We have two to choose from: the *got* passive and the *be* passive. The first tends to be favored in oral communication, the second in writing, especially on a more formal level. One disadvantage of the *be* passive is its ambiguity; it describes either an event or a resulting condition: "When the teacher came the work was done" may mean the teacher found out, like the little red hen, that if she wanted something done, she had to do it herself, or it may mean that she was pleasantly surprised that the work had been done earlier, so that at the time referred to it was finished. There is no such ambiguity in "The work got done." This refers to the event.

This is the key to a very important pattern in Spanish, one as frequently used as it is hard to teach to English speakers. It is often called the "reflexive for unplanned occurrences." Since these occurrences are unplanned, they seem to just happen, so we say:

(35) Se me olvidó la llave.
I forgot the key.

(36) Se me rompió el plato.
I broke the plate.

(37) Se me perdió el dinero.
I lost the money.

(38) Se me cayó el nene.
I dropped the baby.

(39) Se me occurrió una idea.
I had an idea.

These become much easier to unde: stand and to explain if we rememb: that there is no restriction again using a reflexive pronoun to refer bac to an inanimate subject.

There is one other constructio where Spanish uses a reflexive, aga: not usually matched by the reflexi in English. That is a use with a trans· tive or intransitive verb to indica: that the action was voluntary an therefore presumably carried to i logical conclusion. Note the followin pairs of sentences, where the Englis translation tries hard to capture th meaning expressed in Spanish:

(40) Pedro se fue.
Peter went away.

(41) Por fin se subió al balcón.
He finally managed to clim up to the balcony.

(42) El reo se escapó.
The criminal got away.

Or these examples with transitiv verbs:

(43) Elena se comió la manzana.
Helen ate the apple up.

(44) Se lo bebió.
He drank it down.

(45) Se guardó la carta.
He kept the letter.

One final and most difficult (for th English-speaking student) pattern i an extension of the agent deletion con struction. In the Spanish sentenc there is no subject expressed; in th

contrastive study *The Grammatical Structures of English and Spanish* by Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965), this unexpressed and unexpressable subject was called "Person three plus zero." Not having a subject in a Spanish sentence is no surprise—the subject is regularly deleted when the information it would carry is supplied by context. But a speaker can readily restore it on request.

But the P3 + ø subject doesn't really exist, because it was never identified. Thus one may hear or see:

(46) Aquí se habla español.
Spanish spoken here.
(47) Se recibe huéspedes.
Rooms for rent.
(48) Se forra botones.
We cover buttons.

In these we can say Spanish is spoken or we can think Spanish speaks itself, to use in one way or another the word Spanish as a subject. But there is no such equation, however remote, even possible in sentences like:

(49) Se trabaja mucho aquí.
(50) Se vive bien en América.

English fumbles around for a translation, precisely because omitting a subject is not allowed in English. So we must try to find a subject that will be structurally useful and as far as possible semantically meaningless. We say, "You have to work hard here" or "We have to work hard here," trying for an indefinite reference. It is always possible to translate the indefinite agent with "one," but this is really too formal for conversation: "One lives well in America" or "A person can live well in America." Sometimes, as in the translation of *Se dice que los precios van a subir*, we can use a third person with "They say prices are going up."

Some textbook analyses have attempted to present the Spanish pronoun *se* as the subject of the verbs *trabaja* and *vive*. This is not a satisfying explanation since, on the basis of English translation, it assigns *se* a unique function among Spanish reflexives. This indeed is a case of bringing the mountain to Mohammed.

To generalize, the passive construction in Spanish has a far wider application than in English. The Spanish speaker learning English is likely to overuse it. The English speaker learning Spanish may attempt to avoid it, at least in some places where he should use it. Let's look at some specific problems.

It is one thing to discuss the problems of two languages in contact. It is another thing to make a list of the specific problems that must be met when the locale of contact is a language classroom. First of all the list must have an order, and the sequence of that order will be expected to imply more than just a random inventory. One could list transfer problems in the order of their importance in the use of the language being taught, which implies some sort of frequency count. Or one could establish a hierarchy of difficulty based on the degrees of similarity and difference noted in the comparison of specific pattern sentences.

We propose to do neither, but rather to discuss from the point of view of structural transfer, listing first problems that arise in using reflexive constructions when they are needed and second in avoiding them when they are

inappropriate. We will enumerate and briefly discuss, then, selected problems of translation in the area of reflexive anaphora, when a speaker of English must accommodate himself to the patterns of Spanish.

1. There is no distinctive marker that all reflexive forms have in common. In fact, there are no exclusively reflexive first and second person pronoun forms. Only third person is distinctive. This is not a serious problem, but it complicates the identification of translation equivalents.

2. *Se* is undistinguished for gender, number, and dative-accusative case forms. The English speaker may feel his expression is inadequately specified.

3. The English-speaking student must get used, not only to a coalescence for number and gender, but to an unsuspected split for function. Used with verbs all the third person reflexives translate *se;* with prepositions the same forms translate *sí.* Furthermore *se* is weak-stressed, *sí* is strong-stressed. To achieve emphasis, it is often necessary to include both: *El se golpeó a sí mismo.*

4. The student must contend with an overlap of the reflexive *se* with an indirect object *se* (which is nonreflexive) in constructions like *Se lo di ayer.* Correlations with different person forms of the verb (almost nonexistent in English) further complicate the student's task. Spanish *di, diste, dio, dimos, dieron* all turn out to be "gave" in English.

5. One especially difficult problem will be getting used to employing reflexive pronouns with intransitive verbs, as in *Se salió, Se entró, Se durmió,* where translations give no hint of assistance.

6. Another problem is using *se* with certain transitive verbs to reflect translations of particles or adverbs in English, such as "He ate it up," "He took it away," which translate *Se lo comió, Se lo llevó.* Often there is nothing overt in the English sentence to cue the Spanish reflexive. *Se pararon en la puerta* translates "They stopped at the door." "He took a shower" becomes *Se dió una ducha.*

7. The English speaker must become accustomed to using the reflexive in sentences with inanimate subjects, such as *Se cayeron las peras.* One particularly comon expression in Spanish is the use in reflexive sentences of phrase or clause subjects, as in *El lanzarse en paracaídas se cree peligroso* or *El que tengan que llegar temprano se considera de suma importancia.*

8. The English-speaking student must accustom himself to recasting certain sentences that have a possessive adjective into Spanish sentences a reflexive pronoun. "He took off his shoes," for example, becomes *Se quitaron los zapatos.*

9. The English speaker cannot depend on the lexical equivalence of *self* = *se.* The *self*-pronouns must be classified by function, with a separate translation for the emphatic appositives. "I myself will do it" becomes *Yo mismo lo haré,* with *mismo* as an important equivalent of *myself.*

10. *Se* in Spanish frequently must be equated with the English indefinites. Several English sentences, such as "One can't go out now," "We can't go out now," "People are not allowed out now," "It is not allowed to go out now," all translate *No se puede salir ahora.* The English anonymous report "They say. . ." is regularly expressed as

Se dice. . . When the English agent is deemphasized, the Spanish equivalent will almost invariably be reflexive, as in *Se celebra mucho aquí* for "There's always a celebration going on here."

11. The English passive, often the *be* passive and almost always the *got* passive, are expressed in Spanish by a construction with *se*. "It got lost" is *Se perdió;* "The doors were closed promptly at ten" is *Se cerraron las puertas a las diez en punto.*

12. The English speaker will have to remember always to show the identity of subject and verb or prepositional object and an appropriate reflexive. English may say, "He bought him a new car" or "He bought himself a new car." There is no such choice in Spanish; it must be *Se compró un coche nuevo.* In English one says, "He took it with him." In Spanish it must be *Lo llevó consigo,* never *Lo llevó con él.*

13. The English speaker must become accustomed to Spanish transformations which place the reflexive pronoun ahead of its antecedent, a pattern which never occurs in modern standard English. There is nothing in English to match the Spanish *Se mató el pobre hombre.* English must state its subject before it can serve as antecedent to an instance of reflexive anaphora.

14. The English speaker must be ready to incorporate his reciprocal expressions into the Spanish reflex. "The boys fought each other" becomes *Se pelearon los murchachos,* with *el uno al atro* added optionally only for emphasis or clarification.

In comparing the specific contrasts of two languages it could be considered reasonable to assume that the same path that takes you from language A to language B will take you back to language A again. That is to say, the differences in the structures of the two languages are determined by the specifics of the two languages, that they stand in a constant relation to each other. Indeed this is the case where a vocabulary item in one language has a close translation equivalent in the other. The English speaker must substitute *lápiz* for *pencil* while the Spanish speaker substitutes *pencil* for *lápiz.* One substitution is intrinsically no harder than the other.

But in a full comparison there are relatively few one-for-one substitutions. More typically there are rule differences, rule-ordering differences, and item differences, so that any change made in transferring from language A to language B must be integrated into a whole pattern of differences, which go far beyond any single item. The English speaker going to Spanish substitutes *lápiz* for *pencil,* but he must also select the appropriate gender choice for the accompanying article and for any adjectives that appear, and must remember to make other system accommodations, such as an anaphorical back reference with the person three plus zero, since the *it* of the English pronoun reference disappears into the verb in Spanish. "The pencil? It's on the table" becomes in Spanish: *¿El lápiz? Está en la mesa.*

It is also easy to define a contrast in learning problems where two items in language A equate with one in language B. The language B speaker must make a choice based on a distinction that is grammatically irrelevant in his system, a process which is pedagogically difficult. The language A

speaker has a less demanding problem—he merely has the same equivalent for two of his items. His choice is easier, but it may leave him uncomfortable since he is unable to express a distinction that his linguistic experience tells him is important. The Spanish speaker learning English translates both his *pero* and his *sino* as *but;* his most difficult problem is to suppress puzzlement about how people who speak such an underdeveloped language can really express themselves adequately. The English speaker learning Spanish must make a choice which will be very difficult unless he remembers a distributional rule which really seems to him completely unnecessary, like addressing blue-eyed males as *you* and brown-eyed males as *ye,* or something similarly irrelevant and trivial.

Thus in comparing two languages the direction of movement is important. Necessarily many of the same pattern features must be dealt with in either direction, but the selection, sequence, and emphasis of contrasting items will be different. In the following discussion an attempt is made to list problems in an order of decreasing importance.

1. When the Spanish speaker learns English there are a considerable number of problems to be overcome in adapting to the patterns of reflexive anaphora. The most significant is probably the limitation of the English reflexive to animate subjects. English will not allow the freedom he is used to in Spanish.

2. The next problem is a consequence of the first: how to express the range of meanings expressed by the non-animate reflexive patterns of Spanish. This will be a major problem, since the choices in English, while restricted, are seldom either simple or unique. To emphasize the goal and deemphasize the agent English uses the passive, with a choice between the *be*-passive and the *got*-passive, the latter usually but not always restricted to informal expression. Another possibility in English is agent deletion, where the object becomes the subject with no other grammatical mark, almost always limited to constructions with an adverb of manner: "Fords sell well this year," "The house paints easily," "This dress wore well."

3. The indefinitization of the subject is also accomplished by a variety of equivalents, mostly pronouns with deliberately non-specific reference but also nouns like *people,* and circumlocutions: "You mix the ingredients togeter and stir well," "They say it can't be done," "One might conclude it is not possible," "People are funny that way," "It is believed that all perished."

4. English firmly resists any attempt to form an equivalent to the person-three-plus-zero construction in Spanish sentences like *Se puede uivir bien en America, De aqui se ve muy bien,* etc. English demands a subject, and a circumlocution is the only solution: "It is possible to live very well in America," "We can see very well from here," "It's easy to see from here."

5. The Spanish speaker cannot count on the consistent operation of his reflexivization rule in the case of English prepositional phrases. In Spanish, an identity of subject and object in the same underlying sentence guarantees a reflexive pronoun, but in English there is a certain amount of inconsistency. In "She was beside

herself with anger" the reflexive is obligatory. In "He took it with him" the nonreflexive is obligatory. But in "I got myself a new car" or "I got me a new car" there is an option, perhaps correlated with degree of formality. This is pedagogically of less importance than patterns mentioned above because it is possible to choose one pattern for productive use and leave the alternative for recognition on the receptive level.

6. One mystifying construction for a Spanish speaker must be the use of reflexive forms for emphasis. Such sentences as "He did it himself" or "The President herself will do it" have translations in Spanish that are completely unrelated to the possessive.

7. Another problem for the Spanish speaker will be the association of English possessives with his own reflexive adverb of interest. *Se cortó el dedo* must be restructured as "He cut his finger."

8. There are several differences in form that will be learning problems. These must be learned first, since sentences can be made only when the correct forms are available, but they are probably not as difficult to master as the constructions already mentioned. It is true, however, that sometimes the supposedly minor problems can be surprisingly difficult, and that errors easily explained are anything but easy to generalize in one's speech habits. The most obvious contrast in English and Spanish is that English marks all pronouns for reflexive, not just third person. Furthermore it must be a problem for the Spanish speaker to keep gender and number categories marked in the third person forms. His *se* must be divided four ways, for *himself, herself, itself, themselves.* Also it must seem arbitrary that the reflexive pronouns are built on possessives for first and second persons, but on objectives for the third.

9. Finally, the Spanish speaker cannot maintain a distinction he is accustomed to for verb and preposition forms. Regardless of stress or emphasis *se* and *sí* are translated with the same set of forms.

These contrasts taken together will surely place reflexive anaphora high on the list of learning problems a Spanish speaker must meet and solve when he learns English, both for the difficulty they pose as structural and semantic non equivalents and for the frequency of their occurrence in normal English usage, spoken or written.

As teachers of English or Spanish, what should we do with all this information? Perhaps contrastive data of the type cited here, extended to the full range of English and Spanish grammar, could help us teach language skills more effectively. One possible application is to help in the determination of a teaching sequence, to order the learning problems on the basis of the similarity or difference, hence the ease or difficulty, of each teaching item. But other factors must be considered in establishing a valid pedagogical sequence, and no one best ordering has been demonstrated for any learning situation. There appears to be more than one road to Rome in language teaching. Furthermore, we can assume that each language has its own logical structure, a structure that includes implications for its analysis and description. Any deviation from this implicit structure could possibly

be justified on pedagogical grounds, but such deviation would, theoretically at least, constitute a distortion of the inherent structure, one that should be employed only with a good reason.

A more likely application is the identification of particularly difficult learning problems, which will be given special attention and emphasis when they occur on the pedagogical timetable. Drills designed to show very clearly how a semantic area is structured in two systems could effectively reinforce learning activities. Thus a single set of instructional materials could serve a general set of student language backgrounds, if it could be accompanied by a teacher's guide or manual containing supplementary drills and explanations for use in classes with students who speak some particular background language or languages.

Perhaps more significant in gaining long-term pedagogical goals, contrastive information can help both teacher and student understand just where the problems lie, so that grammatical explanations can lead to a clearer perception of different ways of organizing reality. To point out, for example, that reflexive anaphora in English implies an operating subject, while in Spanish the implication is an identified object should provide a satisfactory explanation for a complex pattern of differences in reflexive usage in English and Spanish.

By constructing drills which provide a meaningful context the English speaker will more quickly accustom himself to hearing and using such initially strange sentences as *Se me olvidaron las llaves* and *Antes se vivía muy bien en ese país*, and the Spanish speaker will learn to limit the scope of his reflexive, to avoid such strange sounding sentences as "He took it with himself" and "Mary took off herself the hat" and also to use the *self*-forms in emphatic apposition to produce "He himself let me in" and "She finished the report herself," patterns foreign to native Spanish.

Language is said to represent the genius of a people, its speakers. It is impossible not to lose content in translation. The student who would be fully successful must adapt himself to the molds of thinking the new language uses natively, to see the world as first-language speakers do, not through the filter of item, or even sentence, translations. For one who approaches the task of learning a second language after reaching intellectual maturity, the only reasonable way to proceed is with a conscious understanding of the total system and philosophy of the language he seeks to master. Specific contrastive information at the right time with specific appropriate language experience to reinforce new patterns offers the most attractive possibility of success.